University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 20 May 2016

Report from the Periodic Review of the School of Design held in February 2016 at The Glasgow School of Art

Robbie Mulholland, Clerk, Joint Liaison Committee of the University of Glasgow and the Glasgow School of Art

Review Panel

Professor Chris Platt (Convenor),	Head of Mackintosh School of Architecture
Ms Janet Allison	Head of Policy and Governance (Deputy Registrar)
Mr John Ayers	Head of Technical Support
Ms Jo Crotch	Programme Leader, Postgraduate Studies (MSA)
Professor Nick Dunn	External Subject Specialist, University of Lancaster
Professor Vicky Gunn	Head of Learning and Teaching
Ms Jill Hammond	Head of Student Support and Development
Professor Philipp Heidkamp	External Subject Specialist, Koln International School of Design
Mr Mick McGraw	Programme Leader, MLitt Fine Art Practice
Professor Elizabeth Moignard	University of Glasgow Senate Representative
Professor Nick Pearce	University of Glasgow Senate Representative
Mr Lewis Prosser	President of the Students' Association
Ms Gill Rowe	External Subject Specialist, University of Northumbria

Apologies	Dr Craig Williamson, Registrar and Secretary
Attending	Ms Clare Grant (Academic Registry), Registry Administrator
Secretary	Ms Lisa Davidson, Senior Policy Officer, Policy and Governance

The Review Event was held on Wednesday 24 and Thursday 25 February 2016.

1.   **INTRODUCTION**

Background Information

1.1   Within the Self-Evaluation Report, the School of Design stated its commitment to driving excellence and offering innovative societally responsive design education, practice and research. This document highlighted that Design and the education of designers, was constantly adapting to the changing needs and demands of education, society and industry, which had shifted from largely physical, craft based outcomes to incorporate digital and electronic media. The School had focused on developing ways of exploiting the potential of the fusion of new and traditional technologies at the forefront of current trends in all areas of Design and the creative industries. This ethos underpinned all programme areas, reflecting the forward thinking, experimental, contemporary, applied and essentially collaborative nature of Design.

1.2   Learning and teaching within the School of Design is primarily studio-based, complemented by a programme of study delivered by the Design History and Theory department. In addition to the

undergraduate programmes, in recent sessions the School has developed a series of innovative postgraduate opportunities, linked to Taught Masters programmes and PhD study.

1.3   During 2011/12 the School completed the disaggregation of the BA (Hons) Design programme, leading to individual BA (Hons) and BDes (Hons) named awards including Communication Design, Fashion and Textiles, Interior Design and Silversmithing and Jewellery Design which together with the BA (Hons) Interaction Design, BDes/MEDes Product Design and BEng/MEng Product Design Engineering comprise the Undergraduate portfolio.

1.4   The School of Design's Postgraduate provision expanded significantly in the period under review to include: Master of Research; MDes Communication Design and Graphics, Illustration and Photography; MDes Interior Design; MDes Design Innovation: Citizenship, Environmental Design and Service Design; and MSc Product Design Engineering. These programmes, together with the MDes Fashion and Textiles, comprise the Postgraduate Taught portfolio.

1.5   Since September 2012, the School of Design has delivered Levels 3 and 4 of its Bachelor of Art (Hons) Programmes in Communication Design and Interior Design at GSA Singapore, in partnership with the Singapore Institute of Technology. The programmes enable Diploma students from one of Singapore's approved Polytechnics to progress from a Diploma to a BA (Hons) Degree. Students studying in Singapore benefit from the same programme of study and award as in the home institution, along with resources and equipment provided according to GSA specifications.

1.6   In 2015/16, the School of Design became the 'parent school' for centrally provided, staff development programmes which comprise the taught component of the MEd in the Creative Disciplines. The MEd in the Creative Disciplines is composed of Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching, the Postgraduate Certificate in Supervision and practice based research project. These programmes, aimed at enhancing the design, implementation, and support of learning, teaching, and research within a given educational context.

1.7   In order to more closely align the text-based disciplines to the Schools, and to enhance communication and collaboration, from January 2016, management and oversight of the provision formerly provided by the Forum for Critical Inquiry was devolved to the Schools of Fine Art and Design. As part of this restructure, the School of Design formed a new department of *Design History and Theory* and it was anticipated that this move would facilitate plans for postgraduate expansion and research.

1.8   In January 2015, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and GSA launched a strategic partnership: the *Creative Futures Partnership*. This partnership addressed the Creative Industries, Creative Communities and enabled the creation of a Teaching Studio for the region with international connections based in the Creative Campus. The Institute of Design Innovation (InDI) was the core of this activity and has developed partnerships across GSA and the wider academic community.

1.9   At present, the Creative Campus is based in the Horizon building near Forres, alongside the Digital Health Institute (DHI). It is anticipated that the purpose-built campus at the Altyre Estate, also near Forres, will be ready for occupation in June 2016. The new campus represented a significant expansion of activity and opportunity for the *Creative Futures Partnership*, and a substantial increase in teaching and learning facilities. From September 2016, it was anticipated that three new pathways of the MDes Design Innovation, in Collaborative Creativity, Interaction Design and Transformation Design would be delivered from the Creative Campus.

Periodic Review

1.10   The current session (2015/16) is the fourth that GSA has operated a Periodic Review model grouping cognate provision. This is the first time that the School of Design has been subject to Periodic Review within this model.

1.11 In summer 2014, the School of Design agreed to undertake its Periodic Review a session earlier than scheduled in order to facilitate discussion within the School and aid reflection on a number of management and programme developments which were planned for 2014/15. In the course of the initial discussions, it was found that the management of the programme developments could be progressed outwith the Periodic Review process. It was, therefore, agreed that the School of Design's Periodic Review would be held in 2015/16, in line with the previous timetable.

1.12 Preparation of the Self-Evaluation Report was led by the Deputy Head of the School of Design in conjunction with the Head of the School of Design. A list of the Programme Leaders, Heads of Department and other senior staff from the School of Design is provided on Page 1 of the Self-Evaluation Report. A broad cross-section of staff from the School of Design engaged with and contributed to the production of the Self-Evaluation Report. A number of extraordinary Senior Management Team meetings were convened to consider and shape the Self-Evaluation Report, progress reports were made to the regular management meetings, and the Deputy Head of School also held individual meetings with the Programme Leaders and Heads of Department. More widely, academic and technical staff were invited to attend Staff Forums facilitated by the Deputy Head of School.

1.13 Heads of Department and Programme Leaders were responsible for ensuring that students were updated with regard to the School's Periodic Review. Programme-specific detail was discussed in Staff Student Consultative Committees and the School held a Student Forum specifically to engage the student body on their view of the Self-Evaluation Report.

1.14 Appendix A of this report provides a list of the provision offered and overseen by the School of Design (including student numbers for 2014/15) which was considered as part of the Periodic Review.

1.15 The Review Panel identified themes or topics for further exploration during the Review event. These comprised:

- Over-riding Narrative of the School of Design's provision;
- Distributed Academy and Plans for Growth;
- Intended Learning Outcomes and how they link to Assessment Criteria;
- Development of the department of Design History and Theory;
- Approaches to Collaboration;
- Approaches to Student Engagement;
- Studio Space and access to Technical Resources;
- Approaches to Feedback and Assessment;
- Research Teaching Linkages;
- Approaches to the Analysis of Quantitative Data and how this is used to enhance the student experience.

1.16 During the event on 24 and 25 February 2016, the Review Panel met with the following staff and student groups:

- Head and Deputy Head of the School of Design
- Undergraduate Students
- Undergraduate Students studying at GSA Singapore (via Skype)
- Postgraduate Students
- Programme Leaders and Heads of Department
- Course Tutors and Technicians

A list of the staff and students who met with the Panel is provided in Annex B.

1.17   In addition to meeting with staff and students, the Review panel undertook a tour of the Reid Building, including the workshop facilities, in order to gain a greater understanding of the student experience, accommodation and resources.

2.   OVERALL AIMS OF THE SCHOOL OF DESIGN'S PROVISION

2.1   The Self-Evaluation Report set out the overall aims of the School of Design's provision. The Review Panel discussed these and considered that, within the documentation, an articulation of the over-riding narrative of the School of Design beyond the academic programmes and within the wider domain of Design was largely absent.

2.2   It was apparent from the discussion with the Head and Deputy Head of the School of Design, that there was clarity regarding the School's academic vision and strategy, and how this tied to GSA's overarching strategic plan. The Review Panel was satisfied that the overall aims were appropriate and commended the School of Design on the vibrancy and diversity of the cultural and pedagogical activities that were taking place in the School. It was clear that the School of Design was looking to the future and developing outwardly. (**Commendation 1**)

2.3   The Head of School clearly articulated the position of the School of Design within GSA, and more broadly in the local/global sphere, and this was reflected, to some extent, in the discussions with Programme Leaders and Heads of Department. It was less clear from discussions with Course Tutors, and the student groups whether this top-level vision had translated to a cohesive narrative for them.

2.4   In acknowledging the local/global and innovative and collaborative characters of the individual programmes, the Review Panel recommended that the Head of School, in conjunction with senior staff, articulated a clear overall narrative for the School of Design and established an effective mechanism for communicating this within and outwith the School. (**Recommendation 1**)

3.   EVALUATION OF THE QUALITY OF THE PROVISION UNDER REVIEW

Programme Aims, Intended Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria

3.1   The Self-Evaluation Report asserted that the School of Design's Programmes Aims and Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) were aligned to meet SCQF requirements and professional recognition under the UK Professional Standards Framework. In addition, the aims and ILOs were aligned with the requisite QAA Subject Benchmark statements, the appropriate Professional Accreditation standards (where applicable) and international best practice, as identified by academic staff.

3.2   Programme-level ILOs were set out in published programme specifications, programme handbooks, year briefing documents and frequently within individual project descriptors. In order to ensure alignment of Learning and Teaching inputs with assessment and feedback, all course-level ILOs were also included on course summative assessment and feedback sheets. The Self-Evaluation Report provided illustrations of how this worked across the provision, for example: the Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching programme provided students with a Programme Guide, and grading criteria were outlined and contextualised. In addition, the assessment criteria were also further contextualised for each assessment and reiterated within each project brief.

3.3   The Review Panel engaged with the undergraduate and postgraduate students regarding their understanding of how the Intended Learning Outcomes aligned with the assessment criteria.   It was apparent that while this was to a large extent set out in project briefs, there appeared to be variation between individual departments regarding how this was communicated to students.

3.4   The Review Panel considered that, while the programme aims and the Intended Learning Outcomes were relevant and adequately articulated in the programme and course specifications under review, it would be beneficial for the School to link with the Head of Learning and Teaching

to undertake a mapping of all Intended Learning Outcomes against assessment criteria, external criteria and course documentation. (**Recommendation 2**) It was noted that this had also been one of the recommendations, specifically for the GSA Singapore provision, from the GSA Singapore/SIT Partnership Review held the previous session.

Feedback to Students

3.5   The Self-Evaluation Report set out how formative and summative feedback was provided to students in both verbal and written forms: through regular one to one tutorials; interim reviews; peer evaluation (completed by a student about another student in relation to group tasks within a project, and was facilitated by course tutor); self-evaluation; and record of assessment, which was written feedback completed by staff at either formative or summative assessment points.

3.6   Regular formative feedback and assessment was built into the curriculum design of programmes and was an integral part of the teaching and learning approach within the School. This feedback indicated: *what is good about a piece of work and why this is good; it also indicates what is not so good and how the work could be improved*. The Self-Evaluation Report described how programme teams had developed tailored assessment feedback forms, which were nuanced to meet subject specific needs and, in order to provide a more effective formative function, the written feedback provided strategies for improvement, rather than reiterating areas of weakness.

3.7   At the student meetings, the Review Panel explored the mechanisms by which students received feedback on their work. On balance, the majority of the students expressed satisfaction with the oral feedback they received however it was apparent from discussions that students put greater emphasis on the one to one tutorials, knowing their grades and receiving the written feedback in a timeous manner.

3.8   During the undergraduate student meetings, one of the students reported that in their first year at GSA, their cohort had been informed at the start of the session that no one would receive an *A* in Level 1, which had a demoralising effect on the class. The Review Panel considered that the attitude of the programme team did not recognise that a student could be exceptional within their Level group. Other students provided examples of instances where students received feedback from tutors who had not been involved in their assessment, and who were not always able to clearly interpret the feedback.

3.9   It was apparent, from the discussion with the students, that there was considerable variation between programmes regarding the format of the written feedback, and how quickly it was provided. In the course of the meeting with Programme Leaders and Heads of Department, members of the group expressed the view that academic staff spent a considerable amount of time in the Studio feeding back to students who, at times, did not always perceive that this was happening.

3.10   Programme Leaders and Heads of Department were clear that students were appropriately advised regarding how they would be assessed against the Intended Learning Outcomes: this was provided in a clear and accessible format in project briefs and programme documentation. In the discussions with the students, however, there was a noticeable variation regarding the students' understanding of how their work was being assessed against the Intended Learning Outcomes.

3.11   The Review Panel were of the view that the School of Design should review, evaluate and develop an action plan to improve consistency across the provision in relation to student feedback. (**Recommendation 3**)

Feedback from Students

3.12   The Self-Evaluation Report outlined the various opportunities that School of Design students had to feedback on their learning experience. These included informal methods such as through studio based discussion groups and one to one tutorials, and more formally through Staff Student

Consultative Committees, NSS and PTES feedback, External Examiner meetings with students and departmental Quality Enhancement Questionnaires (QEQs).

3.13 The Review Panel noted that there was variation across departments regarding the use of QEQs and that from 2015/16 the intention was for QEQs to be issued to students during session at formative assessment point. It was believed that this consistency in approach would provide valuable feedback from students that would help improve approaches to assessment and feedback across the School of Design.

3.14 The Review Panel recommended that the School develop common systems to aid transparency and consistency across the provision. The Panel were of the view that the implementation of Programme Handbooks and harmonised Quality Enhancement Questionnaires would be effective starting points. With regard to the Programme Handbooks, it was recommended that this work be prioritised so that from 2016/17, each programme had in place a handbook along the lines of that which currently exists for the Fashion and Textiles undergraduate and postgraduate provision. (**Recommendation 4**)

Curriculum Design, Development and Content

3.15 The Self Evaluation Report provided a clear insight into curriculum design, development and content at the School of Design. Following member discussion, the Review Panel considered that it would be productive to explore four themes in detail: the impact and value of the Academic Discourse meeting; the integration of Design History and Theory; Design Domain; and the influence of research on learning and teaching.

Academic Discourse Meeting

3.16 In the course of the discussions with academic staff and the senior management, it was apparent that the Academic Discourse meeting was valued as an opportunity for senior staff to focus on curriculum development, enhancement and to share good practice. Having a dedicated space to consider and explore curriculum development was a particular benefit given the School's ambitions to further increase the programme provision. It was less apparent whether the Academic Discourse meeting was being effectively utilised to promote strategic discussion between Programme Leaders, Heads of Department and the Head and Deputy Head of the School. The Review Panel was also of the view that there was value in considering how academic staff and students more widely could contribute to the Academic Discourse meeting.

3.17 This forum, separate from more operational considerations, was valued by academic staff, who expressed concern that where there was increasing pressure on staff time, attendance was not always a priority, or indeed possible. It was clear that while academic staff used the meeting as a forum to share good practice, it was not apparent whether there was a collective approach to implementing recommendations: in simplified terms it appeared that where good practice was shared, it was at the discretion of the individual Programme Leader or Head of Department to consider whether they would implement similar practice in their own areas. The Review Panel was of the view that the School should develop an effective mechanism to implement actions agreed at the meeting. (**Recommendation 5**)

Integration of Design History and Theory

3.18 The Panel were keen to explore with staff and students the initial impact of the integration of Design History and Theory within the School of Design, while recognising that although discussions regarding this had commenced in the previous session, it had only been formalised as recently as January 2016.

3.19 The Head of the School of Design provided a well-defined rationale for the integration of Design History and Theory, highlighting that one of the key aims was to more closely align the text-based discipline to the School, which would enhance communication and collaboration, and facilitate

plans for postgraduate expansion and research. The Deputy Head of the School of Design reported that initial feedback regarding the integration from the External Examiners during the interim visit in February, had been positive, and students had also expressed that it was easier to see the link between History and Theory and their studio practice.

3.20 In the discussions with the undergraduate students, it was less clear whether the integration had any discernible impact as yet. Some students felt that they were unable to use what they learned in Design History and Theory in their practice, or how it related to what they did in studio. Others were of the view that there was further scope to shape what was currently offered to provide a more tailored Design History education. In contrast, students studying at GSA Singapore, where Design History and Theory had been more integrated at programme level, considered that what they learned in Design History and Theory elevated them from the diploma level to university level and they stated that they were able to apply Design History and Theory to their studio practice.

3.21 The Head of Design History and Theory informed the Review Panel that the decision to restructure and integrate the Forum for Critical Inquiry within the Schools had been made with limited consultation with staff. The Review Panel considered that aspects of the restructure could have possibly, on reflection, been handled with greater sensitivity. The Head of Design History and Theory clearly valued the role the former department had in encouraging cross-GSA collaboration and offering undergraduate students' access to concepts and theories outwith their specialisms. Concern was expressed that transdisciplinary skills might be lost, and it was considered important that students within the School of Design continued to have access to the expert knowledge of staff now based in the School of Fine Art, citing as an example, the Head of Art Context and Theory and her expertise in gender and cinema.

3.22 It was evident however, that academic staff saw the integration of Design History and Theory as an exciting opportunity to review the undergraduate curriculum, in particular to enhance the link between design history and theory with studio practice, and consider where Design Domain sat within this framework. There was a clear impression from the staff that before major decisions on curriculum development were taken a period of reflection would be helpful, which would allow colleagues to exchange ideas and expertise and develop collectively. It was considered that working in this way would lead to efficiencies and more strategic growth.

3.23 The Review Panel recommended that the School undertake a review of the Design History and Theory provision at the end of its first year of operation and report, as appropriate, to Academic Council, via the Board of Studies and Undergraduate and Postgraduate Committee in Term 2 of session 2016/17. (**Recommendation 6**)

Design Domain

3.24 The Review Panel were interested in exploring the School of Design approach to curriculum sharing and considered that it would be helpful to look at Design Domain in further detail. The Self-Evaluation Report set out that Design Domain was a set of courses which had been designed and developed specifically to be integrated both within and between levels of study. The aim of the courses was to broaden students' awareness of design outwith specialist discipline areas and their understanding of the relationship between design disciplines.

3.25 The twenty credit cross-curricular course was delivered to students, in Glasgow and in Singapore, studying Communication Design, Fashion and Textiles, Interior Design, Interaction Design, and Silversmithing and Jewellery Design, across Levels 1, 2 and 3. The courses shared the same overarching theme, aims and Intended Learning Outcomes, with each department setting their own specialist project briefs in response to subthemes and interpretations and specifying a variety of deliverables.

3.26 The Review Panel heard that in 2015/16 the course launched with a cross-school *Design Domain Symposium*. The event was marked by cross-studio integration between student and staff peers, and the cross-disciplinary approach was enhanced by a variety of invited internal and external speakers. An 'open studio' event at the end of Term 1 granted the students and staff the 'right to roam' to view and comment on the interim deliverables of their peers.

3.27 While the academic staff, at all levels, saw Design Domain as a constructive opportunity for interdisciplinary working, some of the undergraduate students were less able to see the value of the course and where it sat in their overall experience.

3.28 The Review Panel recognised that the 2015/16 delivery of Design Domain represented an expansion whereby previously only Communication Design, Interior Design and Silversmithing and Jewellery had been involved in their delivery. Further, the Panel considered the Design Domain course within the context of the projected 25% growth of the School of Design in the forthcoming sessions and reflected that the additional student numbers would impact on the method of the delivery of the courses. Therefore, the Review Panel recommended that the School reviewed the operation of the Design Domain provision at the end of session 2015/16, and reported as appropriate, to Academic Council, via Undergraduate and Postgraduate Committee at the beginning of session 2016/17. It was considered important that the review be concluded in advance of next session, in order that any adjustments recommended by the review could be actioned and implemented in a timely manner. Further, the Review Panel recommended that the School explore further opportunities for collaborative and interdisciplinary working across GSA. (**Recommendation 7**)

Research Teaching Linkages

3.29 The Review Panel had discussions with staff and student groups regarding Research Teaching Linkages and how current research feeds into teaching. The Review Panel was informed by the Head of the School of Design that the curriculum was delivered in a way that allowed Design research practices to be integrated into the curriculum. Dr Helena Britt, of the department of Fashion and Textiles, utilising archive material in her practice and projects was used as an example of this.

3.30 The Head of School underlined the connections the School had made between Studio Practice, Research Practice and Theory, referencing in particular that the accommodation of Level 1 students next to Masters level students in the Haldane Building was intended to encourage greater interaction and collaboration on an informal basis. This was also the motive for accommodating the Institute for Design Innovation in close proximity to undergraduate and postgraduate students.

3.31 During discussions with undergraduate and postgraduate students there was a marked lack of awareness from some students of the research work undertaken by staff and the Review Panel agreed that the School should identify a systematic narrative for Research Teaching linkages. (**Recommendation 8**)

Student Recruitment

3.32 The Self-Evaluation Report highlighted that the total student numbers within the School had steadily increased in response to GSA-wide strategic directives, and would continue to grow in subsequent sessions. The postgraduate taught portfolio grew during the period of review with the MDes Interior Design, MDes Design Innovation, MDes Communication Design (2 year), MDes Graphics, Illustration, Photography (1 year) and MSc Product Design Engineering coming online since 2010, as a result of which the School's postgraduate taught student numbers had increased significantly.

3.33 The Head of School reiterated that one of the drivers for the disaggregation of the BA (Hons) Design had been feedback from students who wanted to graduate with a named award in a particular specialism and this focus stimulated recruitment. It was clear from discussions with the undergraduate and postgraduate students that they had applied to GSA having been attracted by their particular programme. There appeared to be little or no awareness of the global/local narrative for the School which had been so clearly set out by the Head of School in her earlier discussion with the Panel. It was highlighted in these meetings, that GSA's website presents programme listings, and did not currently group them together under the Schools. It was suggested that there was an opportunity for the School of Design's to revisit its presence on GSA's website to ascertain if enhancement in this area would help prospective applicants better understand the School of Design's ethos and vision.

Student Progression, Retention and Support

3.34 The Review Panel noted that student retention across the programme provision was strong and in line with GSA's sector leading performance. The Review Panel did note, however that for programmes with smaller cohorts, such as the BA (Hons) Interaction Design, or the MDes Interior Design programme, any withdrawals or failures would reflect negatively in percentage terms.

3.35 The Self-Evaluation Report highlighted the role of small-group teaching, one-to-one tutorials, formative review and the pastoral dimension of teaching within the School, which enabled staff to have conversations with students focused upon programme and course Intended Learning Outcomes, and to gauge understanding and progress. The Report stated that the *fruits* of this approach were evidenced in the *exceptional student retention rate*. Given the projected increase in student numbers, the Review Panel recognised that maintaining small-group teaching would be a challenge and it remained unclear regarding how the School planned to adapt its pedagogical practices to accommodate larger numbers.

3.36 The Review Panel were of the view that the Self-Evaluation Report lacked a systematic analysis of management information. Data analysis in relation to opportunities and outcomes for cohorts and different groups of students may have served as evidence of best practice and offered potential areas for further exploration and reflection on the student experience. The Review Panel recommended that the School undertake a systematic analysis of management information and data to aid reflection and evaluation of the effectiveness of provision for all students, and to support annual reflection and the use of planning information through programme monitoring and reporting processes. (**Recommendation 9**)

Quality of the Learning Experiences

3.37 It was clear from the discussions with the Head and Deputy Head of the School of Design and the Programme Leaders and Heads of Department, that creating an atmosphere which fostered and encouraged collaborative creative endeavour was a key aim for the School. This was demonstrated in a variety of ways: from ambitious ventures such as GSA Singapore and the Creative Campus in Forres; the embedding of Design Domain as a key element in Levels 1–3 of the majority of the undergraduate programmes; and the growth in the number of collaborative projects being undertaken across programmes both internally, and externally with the other Schools.

3.38 Undergraduate students were, on the whole, less enthusiastic regarding the opportunities the School had created for credit-bearing collaboration. For example, some of the students expressed the view that the cross-GSA course undertaken early in Year 1 was mistimed and that they would rather work collaboratively across GSA once they had an opportunity to master their own specialism. Other students opined that the opportunities felt *forced* and their experience had depended greatly on the peers they were working with.

3.39 In contrast, they spoke enthusiastically regarding non-assessed opportunities presented by projects such as the Feral Studio[1] which in session 2014/15 hosted fourteen workshops for over 100 students, nine lectures and associated events catering for between fifty to a hundred students per event working collaboratively with Communication Design, the Institute for Design Innovation, Fashion and Textiles, and Interactive Prototyping projects. Students spoke with passion regarding the value of this experience and expressed their regret that this project had not continued in 2015/16 owing to the departure of the member of staff who had initiated the project.

3.40 The Review Panel noted that these opportunities for cross School integration and accessible extracurricular activities were highly valued by the students and evidenced by the following NSS and External Examiners commentary:

Feral Studio' workshops and the drawing club have been great for shaking up work and trying new things. There have been quite a few visiting artists and designers too who have either led workshops or done talks. (NSS comment, 2014/15)

The "Feral Studio Project" has had a major impact on how the students think in the studio and towards their own personal projects. The introduction of international speakers and guests from home and abroad has encouraged connections in the creative industries. The project has sought external and matched funding this takes enormous energy and time and commitment from the staff involved. (External Examiner Report, BA (Hons) Communication Design, 2013/14)

3.41 In commending the School for the vibrancy and diversity of the cultural and pedagogical activities it offered, the Review Panel encouraged the senior management to reflect on how it maintained successful and valued projects, such as Feral Studio in the face of staff changes and growing student numbers.

3.42 The Panel explored with students in GSA Singapore their experience of collaborating with peers in GSA Glasgow on joint projects and during the Overseas Immersion Programme (undertaken at the Glasgow campus between Levels 3 and 4). Students reported that there was not much experience other than during the Overseas Immersion Programme for Level 4 Communication Design and Interior Design. Level 3 Interior Design had a collaborative project with peers in Glasgow on Public Housing Typologies, but students reported that they had to communicate through the Virtual Learning Environment, which presented challenges, and sharing information through this platform often became chaotic. Students in GSA Singapore did identify themselves clearly as GSA students and were keen to work more closely with peers in Glasgow, suggesting that Glasgow-based students should be offered exchange opportunities with GSA Singapore.

Resources for Learning and Teaching

3.43 The Self-Evaluation Report focused mainly on the teaching accommodation in Glasgow, namely the Reid Building, which opened in January 2014, and the Haldane Building. The Self-Evaluation Report acknowledged that there had been a settling in period, and highlighted that feedback on the appropriateness of accommodation has been largely positive. The Report did acknowledge, however, that a number of issues remained unresolved; in particular, the effect of the poor acoustics within the Reid Building, whereby sound reverberated across departments and between the floors of the building. The impact of the acoustic problem had led teaching staff to alter their modes of delivery, often having to take students out of the studio to deliver group work and it was also noted that this in itself was challenging owing to the lack of centrally shared bookable

---

[1] *"Feral Studio is an undisciplined and itinerant space for talks, workshops, film showings, hack-labs and discussions, loosely based around communication and design. Talks are free and open to the general public and design community."*

spaces.   The Report evidenced this by providing comments from External Examiners and student feedback from the NSS, an example of which is provided below:

The building (Reid Building) has a lot of issues with sound and Studio Space (i.e., for crits and tutorials)… These aspects make it difficult sometimes to work in the space." (NSS comment, 2015)

3.44   The Review Panel were keen to explore the students' views on the resources for learning and teaching, particularly in light of the ambitious targets for growth in student numbers. It was clear from discussions, particularly with the undergraduate students in their final year of study, that there had already been a marked increase in student numbers and students were of the view that this had a resultant impact on the availability of studio space and access to technical workshops. Universally, the students which met the Review Panel appeared to view further growth with unease, and did not perceive any benefits of growth, although one student commented that the additional numbers had meant that staff had to be more organised, and that this had been positive for their particular department.

3.45   While some of the academic staff also expressed apprehension regarding how the School would manage the growth in student numbers, it was clear from the discussions, that there was an understanding of why this was necessary and that staff were prepared to meet this challenge. The Review Panel commended the readiness of staff to address the challenges from the disaggregation of the undergraduate portfolio and recent and future growth. (**Commendation 2**)

3.46   The Head and Deputy Head were confident that the assurances provided by the Directorate with regard to the provision of additional resources and appropriate accommodation would be met in the event that the School continued to meet its targets for growth.

Management of the School of Design

3.47   The Self-Evaluation Report set out the roles and responsibilities of the senior management of the School, including Heads of Departments and Programme Leaders: significantly less detail was provided relating to the roles and responsibilities of tutors and lecturers and the Review Panel were keen to explore these roles further in the meeting with Course Tutors.

3.48   In was apparent in the discussion with the Head and Deputy Head of School that there was a clear demarcation of responsibilities: the Head focusing on shaping and projecting the outward vision and ethos, the academic leadership and strategic management of the School; the Deputy Head, focusing on the operational management, programme development and ensuring quality standards were met within the School. This division of responsibility appeared to work well.

3.49   In the meetings with Heads of Department/Programme Leaders, and Course Tutors, the majority of staff appeared to understand their role and responsibilities, and it highlighted that the Deputy Head's *open door* policy enabled staff to approach senior management with new ideas, issues and requests for clarification.

3.50   In terms of GSA's overall strategic plan for expansion, it was apparent that Course Tutors valued the Director's briefings and the communications issued centrally. It wasn't as apparent whether staff understood how the School of Design featured within this strategic plan. There was an appreciation of the logistic challenges in bringing the whole School together for briefings and away-days, particularly given the number of fractional staff, however, the Review Panel were of the view that it would be helpful if the senior management gave consideration to how the strategic vision of the School could be relayed more directly to their staff. Given the ambition to grow student numbers by 25% over 2015-2018, in order to aid transparency and support communication, a diagram to visualise the current and planned growth of the School should be developed for wider dissemination to staff and students'. (**Recommendation 10**)

3.51   It was highlighted in the Self-Evaluation Report, that GSA did not have a central induction or Staff Handbook for new staff. It was reflected in the meetings with Course Tutors, and to some extent

with Heads of Department/Programme Leaders, that for some this had made the initial *bedding in* period protracted and more stressful than necessary. How easily a new member of staff settled and was orientated in their role, critically depended on the support they had from their line manager and input from colleagues. While staff had expressed that this support had been forthcoming in their experience, the Review Panel appreciated that without a systematic central induction, there was a possibility that staff would not be appropriately supported when they commenced their role. The Review Panel acknowledged that this was a GSA-wide issue which could perhaps be progressed centrally, however, it was suggested that the School could work in a more systematic way to ensure that new staff were appropriately inducted into the School of Design.

4. ASSURING THE STANDARDS OF AWARDS AND QUALITY OF PROVISION

4.1 The External Examiners reports were predominantly constructive in the feedback they offered to the Programme Leaders and in the main, overwhelmingly positive regarding the quality of the provision and student experience. There were a number of examples provided in the Self-Evaluation Report which evidenced how External Examiners provided the School with valuable external references for the comparison of academic standards:

The work produced at GSA is generally comparable with work at the top end of the scale with other institutions in the UK and is of a consistent high quality.
(Pat Dillon, External Examiner Report for Fashion and Textiles, 2014)

The standards at the final award stage (noting that this is only the second cohort graduating) were very encouraging… The standards were comparable to UK BA (Hons) awards.
(Sadhna Jain, EE Report for Communication Design, Singapore, 2015)

The course had a diverse range of work and of marks with some very strong students at the top end. The standard of work in each banding was comparable to both the national benchmarks and the programme specifications.
(Cara Murphy, EE Report for Silversmithing and Jewellery, 2012)

4.2 External Examiner comments were employed throughout the Self-Evaluation Report to evidence good practice. As demonstrated in the responses to the Examiner Reports via the Annual Programme Reports, the Programme Leaders were reflective and thoroughly engaged with the feedback provided from the External Examiners.

5. ASSURING AND ENHANCING THE QUALITY OF THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

5.1 It was evident in the Self Evaluation Report, through meeting staff and students, and in touring facilities, that the School of Design places students at the centre of its provision and that there is frequent, healthy engagement with students in this regard. The Review Panel recognised that the School of Design consciously sought to encourage a sense of community with staff and students and foster an environment which enabled collaboration across the School and more widely.

6. SUMMARY OF PERCIEVED STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Commendations

6.1 The Review panel commended the School of Design on the following and identified that these were areas of good practice for dissemination across GSA:

Commendation 1

6.2   The Review Panel commended the School of Design on the vibrancy and diversity of the cultural and pedagogical activities that are taking place in the School. It is clear that the School of Design is looking to the future and developing outwardly.

Commendation 2

6.3   The Review Panel commended the readiness of staff to address the challenges from the disaggregation of the undergraduate portfolio and recent and future growth.

Recommendations

6.5   The Review Panel made a number of recommendations. Unless otherwise stated, all recommendations must be completed during session 2015/16 and be formally reported by the Head of the School of Design to each Board of Studies, Undergraduate and Postgraduate Committee and Academic Council:

Recommendation 1

6.6   In acknowledging the local/global and innovative and collaborative characters of the individual programmes, the Review Panel recommended that the Head of School, in conjunction with senior staff, articulated a clear overall narrative for the School of Design and established an effective mechanism for communicating this within and outwith the School.

Recommendation 2

6.7   The Review Panel recommended that the School of Design link with the Head of Learning and Teaching to undertake a mapping of all Intended Learning Outcomes against assessment criteria, external criteria and course documentation.

Recommendation 3

6.8   The Review Panel recommended that the School of Design review, evaluate and develop an action plan to improve consistency across the provision in relation to student feedback.

Recommendation 4

6.9   The Review Panel recommended that the School develop common systems to aid transparency and consistency across the provision. The Panel were of the view that the implementation of Programme Handbooks and harmonised Quality Enhancement Questionnaires would be effective starting points. With regard to the Programme Handbooks, it was recommended that this work be prioritised so that from 2016/17, each programme had in place a handbook along the lines of that which currently exists for the Fashion and Textiles undergraduate and postgraduate provision.

Recommendation 5

6.10   The Review Panel recommended that the School give consideration to how the vehicle of the Academic Discourse meeting could be effectively utilised to promote strategic discussion between Programme Leaders, Heads of Department and the Deputy Head of the School. In addition, consideration should be given to the development of an effective mechanism to implement actions agreed at the meeting. Finally, the School should consider how academic staff and students can contribute to the Academic Discourse meeting.

Recommendation 6

6.11   The Review Panel recommended that the School undertake a review of the Design History and Theory provision at the end of its first year of operation and report, as appropriate, to Academic Council, via the Board of Studies and Undergraduate and Postgraduate Committee in Term 2 of session 2016/17.

Recommendation 7

6.12 The Review Panel recommended that the School reviewed the operation of the Design Domain provision at the end of session 2015/16, and reported as appropriate, to Academic Council, via Undergraduate and Postgraduate Committee at the beginning of session 2016/17. It was considered important that the review be concluded in advance of next session, in order that any adjustments recommended by the review could be actioned and implemented in a timely manner. Further, the Review Panel recommended that the School explore further opportunities for collaborative and interdisciplinary working across GSA.

Recommendation 8

6.13 The Review Panel agreed that the School should identify a systematic narrative for Research-teaching linkages.

Recommendation 9

6.14 The Review Panel recommended that the School undertake a systematic analysis of management information and data to aid reflection and evaluation of the effectiveness of provision for all students, and to support annual reflection and the use of planning information through programme monitoring and reporting processes.

Recommendation 10

6.15 Given the ambition to grow student numbers by 25% over 2015-2018, in order to aid transparency and support communication, a diagram to visualise the current and planned growth of the School should be developed for wider dissemination to staff and students'.

Recommendation 11

6.16 It was noted that some of the programmes under consideration were in the process of undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment. The Review Panel agreed that the School of Design should establish a schedule for the Equality Impact Assessment of its entire provision which would ensure that all programmes completed this exercise by the end of session 2016/17.

7. REVALIDATION OF PROGRAMME PROVISION

7.1 As an integral part of the Periodic Review process the Review panel considered the revalidation of individual programmes. The Self-Evaluation Report explicitly and frequently referenced individual programme provision. Examples were offered throughout. In conducting the Review, the Review Panel explicitly explored individual programme provision and the student experience therein. All discussions within the Review panel, and with staff and students involved in the Periodic Review process, retained a focus on programme provision.

7.2 The Review Panel invited Academic Council to recommend to the University of Glasgow that the following degree programmes should be revalidated for a period of six years, these being:

Master of Design in Communication Design
Master of Design in Design Innovation and Citizenship
Master of Design in Design Innovation and Environmental Design
Master of Design in Design Innovation and Service Design
Master of Design in Fashion and Textiles
Master of Design in Graphics
Master of Design in Illustration
Master of Design in Interior Design
Master of Design in Photography
Master of Education in the Creative Disciplines
Master of Engineering in Product Design Engineering

Master of European Design in Product Design
Master of Research
Master of Science in Product Design Engineering
Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching
Postgraduate Certificate in Supervision
BA (Hons) in Communication Design
BA (Hons) in Fashion Design
BA (Hons) in Interaction Design
BA (Hons) in Interior Design
BA (Hons) in Silversmithing and Jewellery Design
BA (Hons) in Textile Design
BDes (Hons) in Product Design
BEng (Hons) in Product Design Engineering

8. GENERAL REFLECTIONS OF THE REVIEW PANEL

8.1 The Review Panel noted that the School of Design was, by a considerable margin, the largest and most complex, with the greatest number of programmes and students, within GSA. This had meant that the Self-Evaluation Report and volume of the supporting documentation was extensive, and had been challenging at times for the Panel to engage with. The Review Panel understood that the process was robust and had been modelled on that of the University of Glasgow. The Head of Policy and Governance (Deputy Registrar) confirmed that, in light of the fact that the University had recently reviewed its own process, GSA's process and Self-Evaluation pro forma would be reviewed and adjusted to re-align as appropriate prior to the end of session 2015/16. The Review Panel welcomed this development.

8.2 As confirmed above, the Review Panel recommended that the current degree programme provision be revalidated. It was recognised, however, that given the School's ambitions to expand the programme provision in the future, whole-School Periodic Review might become untenable. The Review Panel welcomed the confirmation from the Head of Policy and Governance (Deputy Registrar) that in order to ensure appropriate scrutiny of programme-related documentation, discussions regarding how to cluster programme provision were underway with the Deputy Head of the School of Design.

8.3 The Self-Evaluation Report identified that there was no consistent approach to staff induction or mentoring in place at an institutional level. It was clear from discussions with Programme Leaders, Heads of Department and other academic staff in the School of Design that inductions and mentoring were organised and implemented by line managers, and that this varied depending on the nature of the role and extent of post. The Review Panel agreed that a centralised Staff Handbook and induction procedure would be beneficial.

ANNEX A: PROGRAMME PROVISION CONSIDERED AS PART OF THE PERIODIC REVIEW

The Review panel considered the following provision offered by the School of Design (including student numbers for 2014/15):

Programme		Student FTE in 2014/15
Master of Design in Communication Design	*A two year programme*	14
Master of Design in Design Innovation and Citizenship	*A one year programme*	3
Master of Design in Design Innovation and Environmental Design	*A one year programme*	10
Master of Design in Design Innovation and Service Design	*A one year programme*	16
Master of Design in Fashion and Textiles	*A one year programme*	15
Master of Design in Graphics	*A one year programme*	3
Master of Design in Illustration	*A one year programme*	3
Master of Design in Interior Design	*A one year programme*	15
Master of Design in Photography	*A one year programme*	3
Master of Research*	*A one year programme*	0
Master of Science in Product Design Engineering	*A one year programme run in conjunction with the University of Glasgow*	14
	Total	**96**
BA (Hons) in Communication Design	*A four year programme*	151
BA (Hons) in Communication Design (Singapore)	*A two year programme run in conjunction with the Singapore Institute of Technology*	141
BA (Hons) in Fashion Design	*A four year programme*	40
BA (Hons) in Interaction Design (formerly BDes (Hons) Digital Culture)	*A four year programme*	30
BA (Hons) in Interior Design	*A four year programme*	69
BA (Hons) in Interior Design (Singapore)	*A two year programme run in conjunction with the Singapore Institute of Technology*	95
BA (Hons) in Silversmithing and Jewellery Design	*A four year programme*	60
BA (Hons) in Textile Design	*A four year programme*	105
BDes/MEDes in Product Design	*A four or five year programme*	109
BEng/MEng in Product Design Engineering	*A four or five year programme run in conjunction with the University of Glasgow*	155
	Total	**965**
	OVERALL TOTAL	**1062**

The School also contributes to the following degree programmes offered by the University of Glasgow:

Programme		Student FTE in 2014/15
Master of Science in International Management and Design Innovation	*A one year programme*	12

* First cohort enrolled in 2015/16

16

The Review Panel also considered the following provision, overseen by the School of Design Board of Studies (including student numbers for 2014/15):

Programme		Student FTE in 2014/15
Master of Education in the Creative Disciplines (PT)	*A two year programme*	0
Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching (PT)	*A one year programme*	36
Postgraduate Certificate in Supervision (PT)	*A one year programme*	16
	Total	**53**

ANNEX B: SCHOOL OF DESIGN PERIODIC REVIEW: STUDENT AND STAFF MEETINGS

1. **Meeting with group of Undergraduate Students: Wednesday 24 February 2016, 15:30 – 16:30, Principal Seminar Room 1**

Name	Year	Programme
Student A	4	BA (Hons) Interaction Design
Student B	1	BA (Hons) Interaction Design
Student C	4	BA (Hons) Interior Design
Student D	2	BA (Hons) Fashion
Student E	4	BDes/MEDes Product Design
Student F	5	MEDes Product Design
Student G	4	BA (Hons) Silversmithing & Jewellery
Student H	2	BA (Hons) Communication Design
Student I	4	BA (Hons) Communication Design
Student J	4	BEng/MEng Product Design Engineering
Student K	3	BEng/MEng Product Design Engineering

2. **Meeting with group of Students from GSA Singapore: Thursday 25 February 2016, 09:00 – 09:30, Principal Seminar Room 1 (SKYPE)**

Name	Year	Programme
Student A	3	BA (Hons) Communication Design (Singapore)
Student B	3	BA (Hons) Communication Design (Singapore)
Student C	4	BA (Hons) Communication Design (Singapore)
Student D	4	BA (Hons) Communication Design (Singapore)
Student E	3	BA (Hons) Interior Design (Singapore)
Student F	3	BA (Hons) Interior Design (Singapore)
Student G	4	BA (Hons) Interior Design (Singapore)
Student H	4	BA (Hons) Interior Design (Singapore)

ANNEX B: SCHOOL OF DESIGN PERIODIC REVIEW: STUDENT AND STAFF MEETINGS

3. Meeting with group of Postgraduate Students: Thursday 25 February 2016, 09:45 – 10:45, Principal Seminar Room 1

Name	Year	Programme
Student A	1	MDes Interior Design
Student B	1	MDes Interior Design
Student C	1	MDes Fashion and Textiles
Student D	1	MDes Fashion and Textiles
Student E	2	MDes Communication Design
Student F	1	MDes Graphics
Student G	1	MSc Product Design Engineering
Student H	1	MSc Product Design Engineering
Student I	1	Mes Design Innovation
Student J	1	MSc International Management and Design Innovation

4. Meeting with Programme Leaders/Heads of Department: Thursday 25 February 2016, 11:00 – 12:30, Principal Seminar Room 1

Name	Designation
Patrick Macklin	Head of Department/Programme Leader: BA (Hons) Interior Design, BA (Hons) Interior Design (Singapore) and MDes Interior Design
Craig Whittet	Head of Department/Programme Leader: MSc Product Design Engineering and BEng MEng Product Design Engineering
Dr Donna Leishman	Head of Department/Programme Leader: BA (Hons) Communication Design and BA (Hons) Communication Design: Singapore
Jimmy Stephen-Cran	Head of Department /Programme Leader: BA (Hons) Fashion Design and BA (Hons)Textile Design
Inga Paterson	Programme Leader: BA (Hons) Interaction Design
Anna Gordon	Joint Head of Department /Programme Leader: BA (Hons) Silversmithing and Jewellery Design
Dr Emma Murphy	Programme Leader: MDes Design Innovation portfolio of programmes
Irene Bell	Programme Leader: BDes/MEDes Product Design
Nicholas Oddy	Head of Department: Design History and Theory
Dr Gordon Hush	Head of Department: Product Design and Programme Director: Learning and Teaching (InDi)

ANNEX B: SCHOOL OF DESIGN PERIODIC REVIEW: STUDENT AND STAFF MEETINGS

5. Meeting with Course Tutors/Technicians/VLs: Thursday 25 February 2016, 13:45 – 14:45, Principal Seminar Room 1

Name	Designation
Brian Cairns	Programme Leader: MDes Communication Design and MDes Graphics, Illustration, Photography
Paul Maguire	Lecturer: BA (Hons) Interaction Design
Ms Julia Maclean	Lecturer: MDes Fashion and Textiles
Pam Flanagan	Lecturer: BA (Hons) Interior Design
Michael Pell	Lecturer: BA (Hons) Silversmithing and Jewellery Design
Stuart Bailey	Lecturer: MSc Product Design Engineering and BEng/MEng Product Design Engineering
Dr Thea Stevens	Academic Coordinator: Interdisciplinarity (SofD)
Christie Alexander	Technician: Fashion and Textiles (UG and PGT)
Ed Pickstone	Technician: Communication Design (UG and PGT) Lecturer: Communication Design (UG)
Jessie ONeill	Lecturer: Design History and Theory courses (GSA Singapore)
Katie McKee	Academic Coordinator: GSA Singapore

ANNEX C: SCHOOL OF DESIGN CLARIFICATIONS POST UNDERGRADUATE AND POSTGRADUATE COMMITTEE

Undergraduate and Postgraduate Committee considered the Review Report from the School of Design's Periodic Review at its meeting of 20 April 2016.

In the course of the consideration of the report, the Head of Interior Design provided the Committee with further context regarding the composition of the student groups which met with the Panel, with particular regard to the points in the report referring to the Design Domain course and the Feral Studio Project as an extra-curricular project. The Convenor of the Review Panel, Professor Platt, confirmed that the report contained an accurate reflection of the perceptions of those students who took part in the Periodic Review. However Professor Platt agreed that the School of Design could offer a concise note of clarification setting out this context, which would be appended to the Report prior to its consideration by Academic Council.

Clarification provided by the School of Design 25 April 2016:

Design Domain
3.27 While the academic staff, at all levels, saw Design Domain as a constructive opportunity for interdisciplinary working, some of the undergraduate students were less able to see the value of the course and where it sat in their overall experience.

The authors of the Evaluation Document would like it noted that of the 11 students based in Glasgow who met with the Review Panel only three had experienced the Design Domain in its current in format; which had been revised for Academic Session 2015/16. This format included the participation of students from Fashion, Textiles and Interaction Design; a cross School symposium, workshops, open studio events and the opportunity to take part in an extra-curricular project in collaboration with Royal Conservatoire Scotland, University of Glasgow and the BBC.

During Academic Session 2015/2016 the Design Domain course has provided an enhanced range of opportunities for students to collaborate across the School; these opportunities will be built upon going forwards. Point 3.27 puts emphasis on the previous model of delivery that has been enhanced for the current academic session.

It is also worth noting that the group met by the Review panel included 4 students who were from either BDes/MEDes Product Design or MSc Product Design Engineering (these programmes do not deliver Design Domain as part of their curriculum) and 4 final year students (Design Domain is not delivered in the final year of study).

3.38 Undergraduate students were, on the whole, less enthusiastic regarding the opportunities the School had created for credit-bearing collaboration. For example, some of the students expressed the view that the cross-GSA course undertaken early in Year 1 was mistimed and that they would rather work collaboratively across GSA once they had an opportunity to master their own specialism. Other students opined that the opportunities felt forced and their experience had depended greatly on the peers they were working with.

3.39 In contrast, they spoke enthusiastically regarding non-assessed opportunities presented by projects such as the Feral Studio[1] which in session 2014/15 hosted fourteen workshops for over 100 students, nine lectures and associated events catering for between fifty to a hundred students per event working collaboratively with Communication Design, the Institute for Design Innovation, Fashion and Textiles, and Interactive Prototyping Art. Students spoke with passion regarding the value of this experience and expressed their regret that this project had not continued in 2015/16 owing to the departure of the member of staff who had initiated the project.

ANNEX C: SCHOOL OF DESIGN CLARIFICATIONS POST UNDERGRADUATE AND POSTGRADUATE COMMITTEE

[1] "Feral Studio is an undisciplined and itinerant space for talks, workshops, film showings, hack-labs and discussions, loosely based around communication and design. Talks are free and open to the general public and design community."

3.40 The Review Panel noted that these opportunities for cross School integration and accessible extracurricular activities were highly valued by the students and evidenced by the following NSS and External Examiners commentary:

Feral Studio' workshops and the drawing club have been great for shaking up work and trying new things. There have been quite a few visiting artists and designers too who have either led workshops or done talks. (NSS comment, 2014/15)

The "Feral Studio Project" has had a major impact on how the students think in the studio and towards their own personal projects. The introduction of international speakers and guests from home and abroad has encouraged connections in the creative industries. The project has sought external and matched funding this takes enormous energy and time and commitment from the staff involved. (External Examiner Report, BA (Hons) Communication Design, 2013/14)

The authors of the Evaluation Document would like it noted that Feral Studio events were an extra-curricular and non-assessed range of activities which were open to the general public.

Feral Studio delivered internally and externally facing events managed by a fractional member of staff as part of his own professional practice. The principle was one of breadth and inclusivity but in practice the sessions were attended predominantly by students from one programme area within the School of Design. In Academic Session 2014/2015 the School of Design agreed to continue to financially support Feral Studio, with the caveat that all activities under its auspices be promoted more directly to all School of Design students and that all subject specialisms be represented in the content and commissioning of lectures and workshops.

The value of extra-curricular activities is acknowledged and highly regarded by the authors; however the emphasis on this single activity over three points in the report, particularly alongside the previously addressed Design Domain commentary, presents an imbalanced picture of the relationship between the School of Design and the inter-disciplinary experiences of students (and staff) within the school.